

Transcript for Damien Haas Interview (Originally from The Anime Nostalgia Podcast - ep 139, released in January of 2025, transcript by Dawn H.)

Dawn: Well, before we start, I have a little gift for you.

Damien Haas: Oh, that's so sweet!

[Here I presented him with a sticker I made years ago, from an old photoshop someone made of Ryoga in the style of "Where in the world is Carmen SanDiego?" logo, that says "Where in Japan is Ryoga Hibiki?"]

Haas: Awwww, NO WAY! I love this!

Dawn: (laughs) It's a little sticker!

Hass: This is so cute! (holds up the sticker to show his friend) Where in Japan is Ryoga Hibiki!

Friend in the background: *LITTLE BOY!*

Haas: So sweet. So sweet! Little fellow. Thank you very much!

Dawn: You're welcome!

Haas: I appreciate it.

Dawn: I was very excited when I heard you were going to be here because Ryoga is my boy. [Here I hold up my lanyard, which has a very large P-chan button on it.]

Haas: P-chan! Yay!

Dawn: A friend of mine got this for me in Japan like, in 2019.

Haas: That's so sweet. It's held up great.

Dawn: Listen Flavor had a collab with uh, Ranma.

Haas: I love that.

Dawn: Yes, so I was like...*My boy!*

Haas: My son!

Dawn: My sweet little meow meow!

Haas: (Singing) *Look at my son!*

Dawn: Well, first of all: Congratulations on getting the role of Ryoga!

Haas: Thank you so much.

Dawn: Uh, everyone--my listeners specifically, like The Anime Nostalgia Podcast that I run, is all about, um...pre-2000s anime and manga and the history--

Haas: okay!

Dawn: -- so obviously my listeners are very excited about all the new Rumiko Takahashi stuff.

Haas: Sure!

Dawn: Specifically Ranma because that was such a formative--

Haas: Yeah!

Dawn: --90s series for a lot of people. So, uh, were you a fan of the series before you auditioned?

Haas: I was aware of the series. I had not, um, seen anything specifically from it. My sister was my sort of gateway into anime. She's seven years older than I am.

Dawn: Ahhh!

Haas: So when it came to that sort of era, the things that were playing in my house were Sailor Moon, Slayers, Magic Knight Rayearth, and then later I stumbled upon Pokemon myself--

Dawn: Ah-haaa.

Haas: --And then sort of put two and two together. So yeah, I missed the classic Ranma phase, both the original 18 episode run, and then the--

Both: --Continuation.

Haas: Yeah! But, um, I'd be excited to go back one day now. I'll probably take some time because I want to have an authentically like new experience--

Dawn: Yeah!

Haas: --while, I am reading the manga.

Dawn: Oh! Mmm-hmm.

Haas: And so I want to take my own spin on that for the recording of this. But at some point I'll go back.

Dawn: Yeah, that's--

Haas: That was the longest run-on sentence ever. So sorry.

Dawn: No, no, no!

Haas: Coffee's kicking in.

Dawn: You're fine. You're fine! So I have to ask, do you also do the voice of P- Chan?

Haas: I do not.

Dawn: You don't?!

Haas: P-Chan is also, that's voiced by Rachel Slotky. She's someone I had met a couple times in passing, but uh, she does some voicing, but also works on the back end of things for producing these shows. So it was really exciting to...find that she was going to be my counterpart.

Dawn: Oh, that's interesting.

Haas: Yeah!

Dawn: Does she do anything else on the new Ranma?

Haas: Ah, that I don't know. That I don't know, but yeah. She does a great job as P.-chan.

Dawn: Yeah, I was, uh...I was like, I don't think it's him, but I want to make sure.
(laughs)

Haas: You know, I went in expecting to do it and preparing to do it.

Dawn: (nods) Right.

Haas: And then when they were like, no, that's Rachel, I was like, that's awesome.

Dawn: Oh, interesting.

Haas: That's actually great.

Dawn: Do you know how to spell her name?

Haas: She's on the socials...Let me quickly pull this up because I feel like sometimes I put in the phantom letter.

Dawn: Yeah, uh, I want to make sure I credit her correctly.

Haas: R-A-C-H-E-L-S-L-O-T.

Dawn: (repeats) S-L-O-T.

Haas: K-Y. Yeah, I always accidentally put in a Z. And I'm like, oh, it's Rachel Slotsky. Because in my brain, I'm like, Slotzky's--

Both: *Deli!*

Dawn: (laughs)

Haas: Yeah, so.

Dawn: So, ah, how much fun do you have in the recording booth with this character? Do you get to like, ad-lib at all?

Haas: It's great. Um...Ad-libbing varies from uh, director to director when it comes to series. But, um, where I do sort of get to have some input there is, we work very hard. And uh, the director, Jaylen, works very hard on making sure that the mouth movements make sense with the dialogue. So sometimes you'll have to readjust things on the fly.

Dawn: Right.

Haas: Um, And while it's not necessarily my job to do that, I will always check if someone's comfortable first. And I might offer up like, hey, this actually sounds like a fun way to say it, would that work? And yeah, um...but mostly they allow me to have those kinds of creative inputs with performance itself. Where I'm like, you know, for example, the first episode that Ryoga appears in, he's just like, you know, "Where's Ranma? Where's Furinkan High School?"

Dawn: Right.

Haas: Like, "Do you know where it is? Do you know where it is?!" So for the last one, right as I'm about to actually stumble upon it, or Ryoga's about to stumble upon it, the

line is like, "Do you know where Furinkan High School is?" Straight up, you know, of course you're asking everybody.

Dawn: Right. (nods)

Haas: But I was like, can I say it like, "Do **you** know where it is?!"

Dawn: (laughs)

Haas: As though I've asked people all day, and then it's just like *you* finally, this is a continuation of like, (says in an almost evil sounding voice) "Do **you** know where it is?!"

Dawn: (laughs some more)

Haas: So they allowed that, and I was like, okay, that's a little bit of character sprinkled in very early on.

Dawn: Yeah, yeah! That's great, that's awesome.

Haas: Thank you.

Dawn: Um, So, what do you love about Ryoga as a character and do you share any character traits with him?

Haas: I think Ryoga is bullish for lack of a better term.

Dawn: Mmmm (nods)

Haas: He charges forward at something he believes in and that's something that I think, you know, is-is very beneficial to learn in a sort of tempered way because I'm somebody that can, I can be a little bit too demure, I can be a little bit too like, I don't wanna step on anyone's toes--

Dawn: Right.

Haas: --but to specifically, you know, charge for it and be like, no, this is what I believe and that's what I'm going to do is awesome.

Dawn: Yeah, yeah.

Haas: You shouldn't necessarily wander through Hokkaido by mistake in the process, but.

Dawn: (laughs) He takes it a little...

Hass: Takes it a little...

Both: --*TOO* far.

Haas: But I do love that he embodies that trait of, this is what I believe, I'm gonna go for it. And there's so many moments even brought up like, "Hey, this is a bad idea. Did you even think about this?" It's like, no, I'm thinking about it *now*, but I'm still doing the thing.

Dawn: (laughs)

Haas: You know, it's fun to play characters with strong points of view.

Dawn: Yeah. Yeah. He does have....kind of blinders on once he's set into something.

Haas: Yeah. The wheel is turning but the hamster's dead.

Dawn: (laughs) Yes.

Hass: Is how I put it.

Dawn: Definitely. Um, So since you also do the voice of Laios in Delicious in Dungeon--

Haas: Mmm hmm!

Dawn: --which I know a lot of people love, um... I also have to ask: if Laios ever knew the secret of P-Chan, would he want to eat him?

Hass: *Whew!* So while I am, you know...n-not official--

Dawn: Of course.

Haas: --like this is nothing canon, not my place. Um, I don't think Laios would.

Dawn: Really?

Haas: I think when Laios questions whether it's okay to eat something or not, it's always a monster. And it's always, you know, the show raises the question about like, what about demi-humans? Like a fish man.

Dawn: Mm-hmm.

Haas: And Laios' whole thing is like, well, that's way more fish than person.

Dawn: Mmm. (nods)

Haas: Like this thing is not a human, it's a fish monster. Like let's maybe try part of it. But P-chan, like, that's Ryoga!

Dawn: Yeah. That's a dude!

Haas: That's a dude! It's a human, and it's a pig, but it's a human. Like, no amount of asterisk next to the pig thing can change the fact that, like, that's a human.

Dawn: Yeah. That's true, that's true. But I just had to, I was like, that's something that popped into my head. I was like, I wonder...

Haas: I'm sure Laios would have the intrusive thought of, like, I wonder if...he would taste different than other humans because he's also a pig. What do you taste like pig?

Dawn: Yeah! Would he taste like pig?? (laughs)

Haas: But also that brings up the very dark thing that supposedly, well....God, am I about to say it?

Dawn: (laughs, wheezes)

Haas: Sorry. Supposedly, pig and human have the closest taste to one another.

Dawn: That's what I was thinking!

Haas: So, Laios would probably, you know what Laios would do? He would have a conversation exactly like this and see who's looking at me. Is anyone looking? Is everything fine? Like, can we just talk about it?

Dawn: (more wheeze-laughing)

Haas: I'm not gonna *eat him*, you know, just talk, you know?

Dawn: A great conversation.

Haas: Sure, a very normal and good conversation that's normal!

Dawn: Well, thank you so very much uh, for this lovely conversation. Is there anything that you want to say to uh, the old school Ranma fans out there?

Haas: Yeah, absolutely. Um, I wanna thank the old school Ranma fans and the community as a whole for being so kind and trusting me with the role of Ryoga. Um, I know it's difficult stepping into a role that has previously been seen, previously been

read, and when you have decades of either a voice in your head build up or how the Japanese voice actor sounded in the original or Japanese voice actor sounds in the current or the English one in the original, like it's...a lot of potential expectation build up.

Dawn: Right.

Haas: And everyone, so far as I've seen, has been very kind. And the internet is not always that way. So thank you for letting me try my best and have fun with our boy.